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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VATICAN 000033

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE LARREA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [VT](#) [SU](#) [PHUM](#)  
SUBJECT: DARFUR: SANT'EGIDIO MONITORING PROCESS

REF: 05 VATICAN 447

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CLASSIFIED BY: Peter Martin, Pol/Econ Chief, Vatican, State.  
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

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Summary  
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¶1. (C) The Community of Sant'Egidio continues to monitor closely the Darfur peace process, but is waiting until the end of the current round of negotiations to retake a more active role. Scelzo bemoaned the widening of the Darfur crisis and said he hoped that "Darfurian stake-holders" could regain control of the peace process. On Sant'Egidio's relations with the African Union (AU), Scelzo said that formally, at least, relations were good. Scelzo and the Community's Claudio Betti briefed CODEL Pelosi February 17, and said the international community needed to press both parties on dialogue rather than favoring one. Some CODEL members objected to what they saw as an equating of the two sides, and emphasized government abuses. The CODEL pushed for UN intervention, and wondered why one didn't see more international or European concern over genocide.  
End Summary.

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Sant'Egidio's Role  
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¶2. (C) The Community of Sant'Egidio's Vittorio Scelzo told us recently that Sant'Egidio continued to monitor closely the Darfur peace process, but was waiting until the end of the current round to renew its more active role. "We don't want to interfere at this juncture," he said. Scelzo has attended various rounds of talks in Abuja and was active in the Community-sponsored talks with Darfur rebels here in Rome last year (reftel). The Community maintains close ties with the leadership of both the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

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Outside Interference; AU Ties  
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¶3. (C) Scelzo told us he thought the widening of the Darfur crisis had not helped resolve the situation. He hoped that "Darfurian stake-holders" could regain control of the peace process. Scelzo suggested that the involvement of states such as Libya, Chad, and Eritrea had further complicated an already

difficult situation. On Sant'Egidio's relations with the African Union (AU), Scelzo was cautiously positive, saying that formally, at least, relations were good. He noted that Mario Giro, Sant'Egidio's lead for West Africa, had enjoyed productive contact with AU leaders at the sixth AU Summit in Khartoum in January.

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CODEL Pelosi  
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¶4. (C) Scelzo and Sant'Egidio's Claudio Betti briefed CODEL Pelosi on Darfur and other Africa-related topics February 17. Sant'Egidio expressed confidence in continued attempts at dialogue as the most promising avenue for peace and said the international community needed to press both parties rather than favoring one. They noted that at present the rebels were making things difficult because of their internal divisions and other problems.

¶5. (C) Some CODEL members objected to what they saw as an equating of the two sides, and emphasized government abuses. They noted that the Secretary had used the term "genocide" that very day with regard to Darfur. The CODEL pushed for UN intervention, and wondered why one didn't see more international or European concern over genocide. Privately Betti emphasized to us that the Community's preference for negotiations did not indicate an endorsement of the government's agenda, simply a recognition that talks were the most practical way to peace. Betti noted that such negotiations could often take quite some time.

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Comment  
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¶6. (C) We have rarely found Sant'Egidio representatives to be naove when dealing with malevolent types on either side of a conflict. The Community has what seems to be a realistic

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approach to negotiations: you have to bring both sides to the table to end conflict. Scelzo told us that he and the Community were appreciative of the Department's work on Darfur, and noted the USG's "important" efforts to unite the two SLA factions.  
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